

Ticket to Work/Work Incentives Improvement Act
Medicaid Infrastructure Grant
Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes
January 16, 2003

Members in Attendance: Nina Davenport, Robert "Red" Foster, Terry Hardy, Bill Heavilin, Robin Renshaw, Robert Simola, Kimberli Varé and Gillian Wells.

Members Not in Attendance: Ingrid Holm-Garibay, Alyce Thrash; Lisa Erquiaga and Paul Gowins.

Staff: John Alexander, Linda James and Mary Jackson.

I. Roll Call – Housekeeping:

John Alexander began the meeting by calling roll. It was determined that a quorum was present.

John discussed upcoming conferences as a part of Housekeeping. He informed the group of a conference sponsored by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services targeted to Systems Change and Ticket to Work Grantees, State Medicaid, Health, Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Aging Agencies, Advocacy organizations, researchers, providers, state legislators, Independent Living Centers and consumers. The event is designed to support current grantee efforts, showcase new freedom initiative activities across departments, inform advocates, showcase important CMS initiatives and introduce new CMS funding emphases. It will be held March 4 – 5, in Baltimore, Maryland. There will be at least one travel day at the front end of the conference. The last day of the conference in Baltimore usually results in a 20 – 21 hour day from start to finish. John stated he would be attending as part of the grant requirements. Because they are offering some items that could be potentially of interest to consumers and advocates John wanted to bring it to the attention of the group to determine if there was any interest to send an Advisory Group member. Grant funding is available to send one Advisory Group Member to the conference. Co-chair, Bill Heavilin, opened up the discussion on who would like to attend. Nina Davenport was selected by the group to attend this conference. Gillian Wells inquired about a conference being held in San Diego as possible the same event. John referenced the Maximus' Ticket to Work Conference in San Diego. MIG staff shared their impression that it is similar to the conference Maximus sponsored in Las Vegas in May 2002 and in Reno in October, 2002.

John continued the discussion with information on the 2003 Workforce Inclusion Conference in New Mexico on March 12 – 14, 2003. Conference highlights include: exploring issues and strategies related to youth as a underserved population; examining

coordination of benefits planning and assistive services with the ticket; learning about issues and strategies related to benefits planning and self-employment; hearing about new initiatives out of the Social Security Office of Program Development and Intervention and the Department of Labor Navigators; and discovering trends in developing a state self-sustaining benefits planning and assistance health care program. There will be representatives from Social Security, Rehabilitative Services Administration, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the Education Department and the Department of Labor. This will offer some networking opportunities. The deadline for reservations is February 20. The group discussed sending an Advisory Group member to the 2003 Workforce Inclusion Conference. John Alexander brought to the group's attention the conflict with dates between the conference and the legislative reception. He stressed the importance of all members of the Advisory Group being present at the legislative reception. Gillian suggested inviting someone from another agency as a collaborative partner or a staff member from one of the Advisory Group members' agencies that is knowledgeable in Ticket to Work to attend the conference and bring the information back to the group. Kimberly Varé requested that this topic be placed on February's agenda for further discussion. John Alexander suggested that this topic be placed close to the top of the agenda due to the registration deadline. The group requested that the information be sent to them via e-mail to share with other organizations.

II. December Meeting Minutes Approval:

Bill asked the group for any changes or corrections to the minutes. Kimberli Varé proposed a motion for the minutes to be accepted as written. Nina Davenport seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

III. Staff Projects Status Update:

a. Section 1619 Outreach

Mary Jackson presented the 1619 Conference Training Evaluation Report. Mary read the narrative portion of the report to the Advisory Group. The report covered statistics from the training evaluations and community attendance. John Alexander reported that one of the 1619 Conferences was taped. The tape is available to be checked out to interested agencies/organizations. A duplicate will be made so that a 1619 Conference Training tape will be available in both Northern and Southern Nevada.

John Alexander reported that we are continuing on with the 1619 outreach effort, however the focus will now be on consumers. He stated that a letter is currently at state printing that will be sent out to consumers. John stated that the purpose of the letter is get feedback from consumers indicating their interest in 1619 Training as well as the time and day of the week that would best work with their schedules. The consumer letters will go to 13,800 current SSI Medicaid recipients in Nevada. John feels that the letters would be sent

out by the end of January. The letters request a response by February 28, 2003 to the MIG office. MIG is currently considering having Michael Walling back to do the consumer 1619 trainings.

John updated the Advisory Group on the 1619 posters. He stated that we have currently received approximately 30-35 orders from various agencies/organizations. To date, no orders from the Welfare Division, DETR or Vocational Rehabilitation have been received. John stated that he has followed-up with these agencies. He feels we should begin to see the posters in various offices shortly after the first of February.

b. “Partners for Profits” Conference

John Alexander reported that a conference call was held this past Tuesday with the Governor’s Committee staff. At this time, there has not been a tremendous amount of progress made on this project except for Mary’s design and installation of an Access database for the Governor’s Committee’s Las Vegas office, approximately 4-6 weeks ago. The intention was to interface the database with some assistive technology for one of their staff members. The Governor’s Committee staff have just begun the survey of employers who attended the Employer Conference this past July and/or established Employment Networks. There are additional categories of employers that have been accumulated that will also be contacted. John stated that there have been some glitches left with the software/hardware that should be resolved next week. Once the survey is completed and employers’ needs are identified planning of the conference will begin.

c. Emerging Policy Issues

John Alexander referred the Advisory Group members to the Emerging Policy Issue for HIWA spreadsheet to continue their recommendations to the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy on HIWA policies. The discussion began with the question of Continuation of eligibility. John explained current policies in effect in California, Indiana, Kansas and New Mexico. He informed the group of suggestions received from the Welfare Division staff and the thought process that supported the recommendations. After extensive group discussion Kimberly Varé made the following motion: “the month of ineligibility begins the first day of the third week following the month in which employment ended unless there is a good cause due to hospitalization, inability to work that is directly related to the disability, work site closure, or a lose of current transportation no other alternative means of transportation is available. If good cause exists, eligibility continues for an additional 6 months following the month in which employment ended.”

After more dialogue regarding this motion Kimberly Varé restated the motion as follows: “the month of ineligibility begins the first day of the third month in

which employment ended unless there is good cause due to hospitalization, inability to work that is directly related to the disability, a work site closure, loss of current transportation and no other alternative means of transportation is available. If good cause exist eligibility continues for the next 6 months following the month in which the employment ended.” Nina Davenport seconded the motion. **The motion was approved by majority vote, one abstained.**

The group had more discussion on the time frame for ending eligibility. Kimberly Varé amended her motion to read as follows: “The month of ineligibility begins on the first day of the third month following the month in which employment ended. Unless there is a good cause due to hospitalization, inability to work that is directly related to a disability, a work site closure, or a loss of current transportation and no other alternative means of transportation is available. If good cause exists eligibility continues for an additional six months following the month in which eligibility ended.” Nina Davenport seconded the amendment to the motion. **The motion was approved by majority vote, one abstained.**

John Alexander began discussion of the next policy issue, retroactive enrollment prior to application date. John reviewed the policies for California, Indiana, Kansas and New Mexico with the group. Kimberly Varé motioned that the group adopt the following policy of retroactive enrollment prior to application date: “three months prior to the motion of application all eligibility factors must be met for each month requested in the prior period.” Nina Davenport seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

John began discussion of the last policy issue, premium payment/nonpayment. He stressed the importance of maintaining the integrity of the program by developing policies that prevent/reduce abuse of the program. After much discussion about Oregon’s, Washington and Kansas policy statements on this issue Kimberly Varé made a motion to adopt the premium payment of Indiana to read as follows: “when an applicant is determined eligible they are conditionally approved pending payment of the premium. The first month for which a premium is required is the month following the month in which an application is approved as conditional. The consumer must pay the first premium in order to receive coverage. If payment is not received by the due date specified in the second premium notice, the Medicaid application is denied. A payment of less than the full amount due is considered nonpayment. If any premium after the first premium is not paid by the due date, coverage continues for a maximum of 60 days before being discontinued. Any consumer discontinued from the program due to non-payment of premiums must re-apply. To be reenrolled, the individual must pay all past due premiums in addition to premium owed for the current application. Past due premiums remain the obligation of the individual as a condition of eligibility

for two (2) years after the date of discontinuance.” Robin Renshaw seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

d. Advisory Group Membership Vacancy

John Alexander informed the group that Tracy DuPree was selected to fill the vacancy left by Vinny Ribas resignation. John Alexander made the selection as outlined the Advisory Group’s By-laws. Tracy will be representing the Reno area on the advisory group and will attend the February’s meeting. John will be meeting with him to prior to the meeting to provide an update on current issues the group is working on. Gillian Wells recommended that someone from business and industry and also a legislator be considered for future vacancies. The group discussed the adverse effect of having a legislator on the Advisory Group and the intent of the federal regulation for the grant to encourage public policy making. Gillian Wells reiterated her recommendation to have representatives from business and industry and the legislature.

Mentoring Organizations Staff Meetings

Linda James gave the group an update on her contacts with mentoring organizations. Two organizations are interested in Kimberly Varé and/or another Advisory Group member to speak at one of their group meetings. One is the Youth Mentoring Program with Lana Harmon in Fallon whose group meets the last week of every month and the second one is Big Brothers/Big Sisters in Reno – Sparks. The Center for Independent Living meets individually with their volunteers instead of in a group setting. The Boys and Girls Club in Carson has not contacted her back and the Youth Connection in Dayton is not interested at all. Linda James will forward contact information to Kimberly Varé to schedule presentations. Kimberli informed the group that her presentation will cover information on what the Advisory Group is doing, offer support from the Advisory Group to help increase the agency’s mentoring programs and explain what the Ticket to Work program is.

IV. Legislative Strategy:

a. Advisory Group Members’ Educational Contacts with Legislators

Co – chair, Bill Heavilin, suggested moving to agenda item IV Legislative Strategy. Kimberly Varé supported the suggestion. Gillian Wells and Robin Renshaw requested this topic be discussed later when Paul Gowins would be available. John Alexander restated Paul Gowins’ comment that he would only be available for 40 minutes at the beginning of the meeting due to medical appointments and we may have missed that opportunity due to the meeting

getting started late and technical issues. The group agreed to continue with this agenda item.

Each Advisory Group member updated the group regarding their contacts with the Assemblymen and Senators assigned to them on the Assembly Member Information Sheet and the Senate Member Information Sheet.

Kimberli Varé reminded the group that they agreed to the deadline of January 17, 2003 to complete their contacts with their assigned Assemblymen and Senators. She offered her assistance to any member with letters, faxes and hand delivering with what ever needed to be done. She stressed the importance of follow-through with all legislators. Kimberli also stated she will contact Paul Gowins and Ingrid Holm-Garibay to see if they need assistance with their educational contacts. The group decided to make the following contact reassignments:

Gillian Wells:

Assembly Members

Chris Giunchigliani
Richard Perkins

Senate Member

Sandra Tiffany

Nina Davenport:

Assembly Member

Kathy McClain

Bill Heavilin:

Assembly Members

Kelvin Atkinson
Harry Mortenson.

Senate Member

Dina Titus

Bob Simola:

Assembly Member

Bob McCleary

The Advisory Group requested HIWA letterhead stationery and #10 stamped envelopes be sent to each member in order to send personal thank you notes to Legislative members. Linda James said she would e-mail the stationery to all members with a current e-mail address and by mail to Ingrid Holm-Garibay. Mary Jackson will send each Advisory Group member stamped #10 envelopes for thank you notes.

b. Planning Status Report on 3/12/03 Legislative Reception

Co-Chair, Bill Heavilin, requested Kimberli Varé give the group an update on the Legislative Reception. Kimberli stated that the last information she received is that the Southern Nevada Center for Independent Living Center had done the reception in the past. She plans to contact Lisa Erquiaga, Paul Gowins, Southern Nevada Center for Independent Living, Developmental Disability Council and the Special Education Advisory Council to get an update, identify each agency's role and e-mail the Advisory Group members with the results from her contacts. John offered MIG staff support in arranging a conference call meeting for the Reception Planning Committee if needed.

Gillian Wells made the motion "that the Advisory Group will take the lead and participate in the reception on March 12 and make sure that the reception occurs working with collaborative partners". Kimberli Varé seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

V. Old Business

a. Brochure for Consumers on "Ticket to Work" Collaborative Effort with Other Key Agencies

John Alexander reviewed December's minutes on the brochure for consumers on "Ticket to Work" topic. He updated the group on last communication with Vocational Rehabilitation regarding the link from their website to the Medicaid Infrastructure Grants website and his continued efforts to follow-up on all communication initiated with VR. The group was informed by Mary Jackson that as of yesterday no linkage from VR to the MIG website was established. Gillian Wells made the following motion: "that the advisory group recommend to the ticket team to create some sort of brochure that is collaborative with other key agencies that will help consumers understand the ticket to work process." Robin Renshaw seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.** Gillian Wells added that the group should promote the ticket team as an educational tool, to provide trainings and presentations on the Ticket program for the community.

b. Disability – related Activities/Events in 2003

Linda James informed the group that as to date she was not able to identify any new disability related activities/events for 2003. She had contacted Mary Winkler, with OARC. Mary offered to keep Linda informed about upcoming activities.

Mary Jackson requested a volunteer from the group to assist with the booth at the LIFT conference on March 8th from 8 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Bill Heavilin volunteered to assist at the Lift Fair. Mary shared a flyer with the Advisory

Group regarding the winning Solutions Changes Lives Conference being held on February 22 – 28 at the Circus Circus Hotel.

Nina Davenport requested a group member to work the booth at the MS Fair on March 29, 2003. Kimberli Varé volunteered to assist at this event. John Alexander requested Kimberli to identify her travel needs and notify him so that flight, transportation and hotel arrangements could be made.

VI. Group Report

a. Gillian Wells – Vocational Rehabilitation Council/Parent Forum Update

Gillian Wells informed the group that the next Vocational Rehabilitation Council meeting will be in March. Gillian informed the group that the update she provided in November is the most current information on the council's activities. Gillian requested that it be noted that the Parent Forum is now known as the Transition Forum. The Transition Forum is currently focusing on memorandums of understanding between VR and the School District and cooperative agreements that have been agreed upon between VR and the Department of Education. Speakers' on community based assessments and the Governor's task force on Disability were at the last forum meeting. The next meeting is February 19, 2003 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Reno, Las Vegas and Fallon. Gillian requested assistance from Linda James in getting people to attend at the Fallon satellite site.

b. Alyce Thomas – Report on Meeting with Governor Guinn's Staff Member

Mary Jackson informed the group that she spoke with Alyce Thomas earlier during the week. Alyce said she might not be able to attend all of the meeting and would e-mail her report on her meeting with the Governor's staff. Mary received an e-mail but the attachment was blank. That was Mary's last communication with her.

Other Discussion:

Gillian Wells asked if the group had sent anything to Paul Gowins. Each member acknowledged that they individually contacted or sent cards to Paul while he was in the hospital. John Alexander gave the group an update on Paul's medical status along with home contact information.

Bob Simola expressed his concern regarding attendance. He stated that members who are not attending need to be asked to resign or we need to get them back into the group. Mary Jackson read the section in the By-Laws that covers attendance: *Advisory Group members are responsible for attending and participating in monthly group meetings to retain membership. However, members who have been absent three times in a fiscal year due to extenuating circumstances may*

retain membership on a majority vote of the Advisory Group. Gillian made a motion “that the Advisory Group makes every attempt to contact those that are currently in violation or pending violation of the By-Laws so that in February the Advisory Group co-chairs or the MIG Staff can report to the Advisory Group what has taken place so that the Advisory Group at that point can make a determination.” Kimberli seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

VII. Public Comment Period:

No public comments.

The meeting was adjourned.